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## Podcasting

Jennifer A. Bartlett

University of Kentucky, [jen.bartlett@uky.edu](mailto:jen.bartlett@uky.edu)

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## Podcasting

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# internet reviews

## PODCASTING

BY JENNIFER A. BARTLETT

INTERIM ASSOCIATE DEAN OF TEACHING, LEARNING, & RESEARCH • UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY LIBRARIES

Podcasts seem to be everywhere these days, on every topic including current events, games, entertainment, education, business, financial management and more.

A podcast is an on-demand, free audio series available via the internet for automatic download to a computer or mobile device. The term "podcast" combines "iPod and broadcast," and certainly these programs are optimally accessed via mobile devices, although not necessarily an Apple iPod. The idea of attaching audio files to an RSS feed originated in the early 2000s; one of the first popular podcasts appeared in 2004 when former MTV VJ Adam Curry launched his show Daily Source Code.

Podcasts are easy to access and produce, and the number of podcasts has exploded over the past two decades. According to the website Podcast Insights, there are more than 1,750,000 shows and over 43 million episodes as of

January 2021 (<https://www.podcastinsights.com/podcast-statistics>). There's even an "International Podcast Day" every September 30th (<https://internationalpodcastday.com>) that highlights developments in podcasting and sponsors its own People's Choice awards. This American Life, a podcast from National Public Radio, won the first Pulitzer Prize for audio reporting in 2020 for its episode on immigration at the U.S.-Mexican border (<https://www.thisamericanlife.org/688/the-out-crowd>).

As podcasts have now become a recognized source of entertainment, news, and information, how can we become familiar with listening to podcasts and integrating them into our work in libraries? The following resources offer a few places to get started. Given the nature of the medium, some sites are optimized for viewing and listening on mobile devices.

### GENERAL DIRECTORIES



**Apple Podcasts**

#### **Apple Podcasts**

**<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/genrel/podcasts/id26>**

Apple Podcasts is one of the largest platforms for podcasts and offers access via the Podcasts app for iOS and iTunes on the Mac and PC. The online directory divides podcasts into subjects including arts, business, comedy, education, leisure, news, science, sports, and more; the mobile app allows for keyword

searching and provides suggestions based on listening habits. Directory entries include the show's logo, brief description, link to the show's website, and a list of available episodes in reverse chronological order.



#### **Stitcher**

**<https://www.stitcher.com>**

Stitcher, "designed for podcasts and nothing else," is another one-stop shop for finding podcasts. This directory allows searching by top ranked podcasts or by category. The mobile app allows users to "like" an episode, leave

comments, and share it with others via text, social media, etc.). The Listen Later feature highlights individual episodes in the user's directory. Stitcher also produces an annual podcasting report analyzing listener demographics, industry statistics and trends, and forecasts.



### **Spotify**

**<https://www.spotify.com/us>**

Spotify is a streaming service that features digital music, videos, and podcasts via mobile and desktop apps, PlayStation, Xbox, TV, smart-watches or web player. The desktop player can also be used to play MP3 and MP4 audio files already stored on the computer. Signup is free (there is also a premium version), and while Spotify is optimally used for music, podcast listeners can search by genre, author/producer, podcast name, and more. Podcasts can be saved in the "Your Library" section and users can create multiple playlists of individual episodes. Spotify's library is fairly deep and also offers audiobooks, radio dramas, speeches, and other spoken word material (in addition to its more than 50 million songs).

For more podcast directories see the regularly updated list at the website RSS.com: <https://rss.com/blog/podcast-directory-list>.

## **PODCAST SAMPLER**

With so many podcasts to choose from, it's next to impossible to pick "the best" among different categories. The following popular, well-established podcasts are solid players in their respective categories and good places to begin.



### **International News and Current Events: Monocle**

**<https://monocle.com/radio>**

An offshoot of a print global affairs magazine first published in 2007, the Monocle 24 online radio station offers 24-hour live shows and podcasts on the topics of news, foreign affairs, business, culture, and more. Podcasts available via Monocle include The Globalist, The Briefing, The Entrepreneurs, The Menu, and more. Programs are listed by day and time, by show/podcast, and by topic.

Of course, BBC continues its reputation as a global news leader through its own Global News Podcast, updated twice a day on weekdays and daily on weekends, at <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p02nq0gn>. Also see Public Radio International's The World at <https://www.pri.org/programs/the-world> and one of the most popular news podcasts, The Daily from the New York Times at <https://www.nytimes.com/column/the-daily>.



### **Sports: ESPN Daily**

**<https://www.espn.com/espnradiolpodcast>**

Sportswriter and columnist Pablo Torre hosts this weekday morning show covering all things in the world of sports, featuring in-depth reports on athletes, key games, team news, and more. You can find ESPN Daily and many other original ESPN podcasts listed on the network's website.



### **Technology: This Week in Tech (TWiT)**

**<https://twit.tv/shows/this-week-in-tech>**

This Week in Tech is a technology news and reviews magazine hosted by programmer and author Leo Laporte and available in both audio and video formats. Other podcasts on the TwiT network focus on more targeted aspects of tech including computer security, smart technology, mobile technologies, enterprise technology, photography, and more.



### **Science: Science Friday**

**<https://www.sciencefriday.com/radio>**

This podcast, hosted by science correspondent Ira Flatow, has offered news about science and technology for 25 years; examples of recent topics covered include coronavirus vaccines, a decline in honeybee populations, mapping sourdough microbes, and President Biden's climate policy. In addition to presenting an archive of episodes, the well-organized Science Friday website allows listeners to browse by topics, including earth science, nature, math, energy, brain, and more.

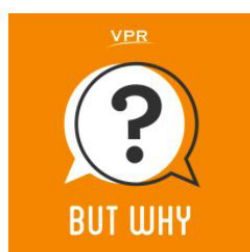


**Popular Culture: Open Source**  
<https://radioopensource.org>

Open Source with host Christopher Lydon has been in production since 2003 and is now a weekly show on 90.9 WBUR in Boston. This weekly podcast offers high-quality interviews and commentary on current popular culture, current events, history, arts and literature, and much more.

Another fun and entertaining podcast is Stuff You Should Know at <https://www.iheart.com/podcast/105-stuff-you-should-know-26940277>. SYSK was originally an offshoot of the website HowStuffWorks.com, and its eclectic collection of over 300 topics such as the history of Necco Wafers, how GroundHog Day works, and why you think eyes in a painting are following you are well worth the listen. Also don't miss Radiolab, one of the many podcasts produced in the studios of WNYC, at <https://www.wnycstudios.org/podcasts/radiolab>.

## PODCASTS FOR KIDS



**But Why: A Podcast for Curious Kids**  
<https://www.vpr.org/programs/why-podcast-curious-kids>

Why is the sky blue? How do you make ice cream? Are unicorns real? Why do things seem scary in the dark? But Why, a biweekly podcast from Vermont Public Radio, takes questions submitted by kids about any topic and produces fact-based episodes, often with the help of experts (for example, who better to ask about being scared of the dark than Daniel Handler, aka Lemony Snicket?). Each episode is accompanied by educational materials including learning guides, printable exercises, slide decks, transcript, and coloring pages.



**KidNuz**  
<https://www.kidnuz.org>

It can be difficult to introduce kids to news and current events. KidNuz, a podcast created by a group of mothers who work in broadcast news, is a short daily program featuring an average of five kid-appropriate stories per episode plus a news quiz at the end. Parents and teachers can find additional resources such as printable quizzes and tips for talking about current events in the Teachers' Lounge and Extra Credit sections of the KidNuz website.

## BOOK CLUB FOR KIDS

**Book Club for Kids**  
<https://www.bookclubforkids.org>

The Book Club for Kids podcast puts middle schoolers in center stage talking about popular young adult titles and sharing their favorite book recommendations. Host Kitty Felde moderates the discussion, and a celebrity guest reads a passage of the book in each episode. Curriculum guides accompany many of the titles discussed, and special sections include "Tips for Creating Lifelong Readers" and "The African-American Experience Through the Centuries."

Jennifer A. Bartlett  
[jen.bartlett@uky.edu](mailto:jen.bartlett@uky.edu)